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Federal lawsuit seeks to ban legal prostitution in Nevada

By SCOTT SONNER, Associated Press 18 hrs ago



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RENO, Nev. — A Texas woman who says she was forced into prostitution at a Nevada brothel has filed a lawsuit seeking to outlaw bordellos in the state under a century old U.S. law prohibiting the transport of women across state lines for prostitution.

She also wants a judge to order the state to deposit \$2 million in a fund annually to assist people seeking to exit the sex trade, including providing mental health services, job training and tattoo removal.

Lawyers for Rebekah Charleston cite the Mann Act of 1910 in the suit filed Monday in federal court in Reno.

The law banned interstate or foreign commerce transport "of any woman or girl for prostitution, debauchery or for any other immoral purpose."

Legal brothel operators argue women who work there are safer than those who engage in illegal prostitution on the streets.



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Federal lawsuit seeks to outlaw brothels in Nevada, the only state with legal prostitution



Tuesday, February 26 - 11:13 PM [Ventura County Star](#) - Amy Alonzo

Reno lawyer Jason Guinasso, representing former brothel worker who says she was trafficked, files suit in federal court... [\[Read More\]](#)

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Federal lawsuit targets brothels in NV

By Newsroom

A federal lawsuit seeks to shutter all brothels in Nevada. The Reno Gazette-Journal reports the lawsuit was filed by Rebekah Charleston, who claims brothels violate her constitutional rights. She's seeking an injunction against the brothels in several places including Lyon and Storey counties. Last November, Lyon County voters defeated a measure that would've banned brothels.

Feb. 26, 2019 at 11:59 am

STORY ARCHIVE

- February 2019
- January 2019
- December 2018
- November 2018
- October 2018
- September 2018
- August 2018
- July 2018
- June 2018
- May 2018
- April 2018
- March 2018
- February 2018
- January 2018
- December 2017
- November 2017
- October 2017
- September 2017
- August 2017
- July 2017
- June 2017
- May 2017
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Lawsuit seeks to ban legal prostitution in Nevada

Scott SonnerAssociated Press

February 26, 2019

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"The primary intent was to combat prostitution, immorality and human trafficking for the purposes of prostitution in the United States," according to Jason Guinasso, her Reno-based attorney.

Nevada law legalizing houses of prostitution in rural counties outside Las Vegas and Reno is in violation of the U.S. Constitution because "the brothel industry in Nevada openly notoriously persuades, induces, entices and coerces individuals to travel in interstate commerce to commit acts of prostitution," the suit alleges.

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Gilman said all workers there are independent contractors who undergo FBI background checks annually and regular health checkups to guard against sexually transmitted diseases.

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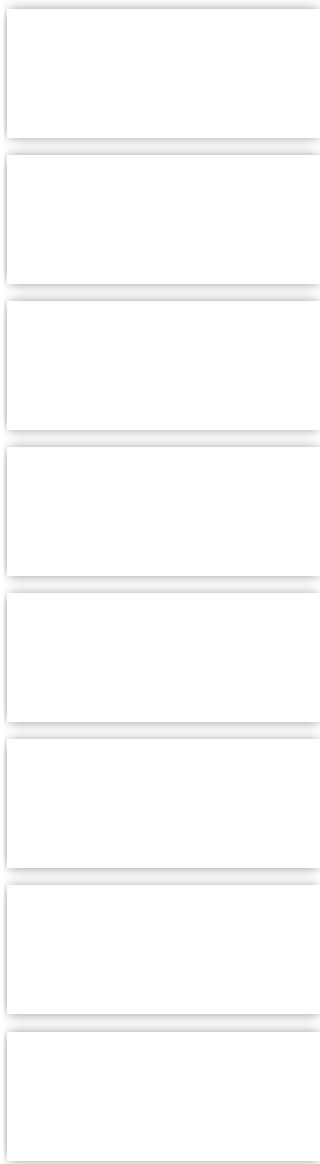
"The women who have been trafficked through Nevada's legal brothel market have been subject to the deprivation of rights, privileges and immunities secured by the Constitution," the suit said.

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Lawsuit seeks to close Nevada brothels

Tuesday, February 26 12:29



A woman who says she was trafficked in Nevada brothels filed a federal lawsuit Monday to try to end legal prostitution in the state.

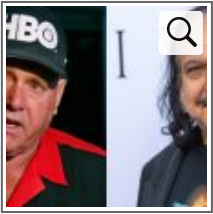
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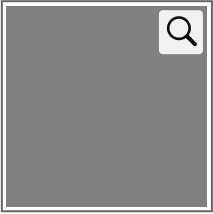


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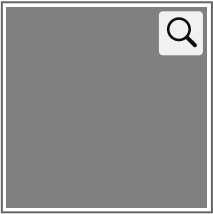


Nevada Voters Elected a Dead Brothel Owner to State Assembly
Deceased Nevada brothel owner Dennis Hof (R) won a seat .11/07/2018 7:56:59AM EST.

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‘I GOT A LOT TO SAY’: Obama refers to himself 92 times during 38-minute NV speech

Monday, October 22 11:55



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Texas anti-sex trafficking activist sues Nevada to end legalized prostitution



Ryan Sanders, Contributor

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An anti-human trafficking activist in North Texas has filed a federal lawsuit against the state of Nevada in a bid to end legalized prostitution there. The complaint, filed Monday morning in Reno by Rebekah Charleston, contends that Nevada's legal brothels are in violation of federal law preventing interstate commerce in prostitution, and that the market created by those brothels contributes to illegal sex trafficking. It names the state of Nevada, its Legislature and Gov. Steve Sisolak as defendants.

Charleston claims to have been trafficked in one of Nevada's legal brothels. Trafficking is illegal in every state, but prostitution is legal in Nevada only in licensed brothels in counties with fewer than 700,000 residents. There are currently 21 such brothels operating in seven counties. Now, more than a decade after her experience there, Charleston is executive director of Valiant Hearts, a nonprofit organization working to end sexual exploitation. She described her life as a victim of sex trafficking and her escape in a profile in *The Dallas Morning News*.



"Prostitution is inherently violent and no state in America should be a pimp-by-proxy, which is exactly what Nevada is doing by allowing brothels to exist," Charleston said. "It not only violates federal laws, but it also makes women public sexual property."

Charleston's attorney, Jason Guinasso, has been part of political efforts to end legalized prostitution before. He promoted a referendum to rescind prostitution laws in Lyon County, Nev., last year that was defeated.

"We just want to put a stop to this evil that is clearly harming women and clearly in violation of federal law," Guinasso said.

But it won't be easy.

"Going to federal court is no joke," Guinasso said. "Rebekah is symbolic of other women who have been subjected to this mistreatment, but it's hard to get a plaintiff to put their life on the line and withstand all the public scrutiny."

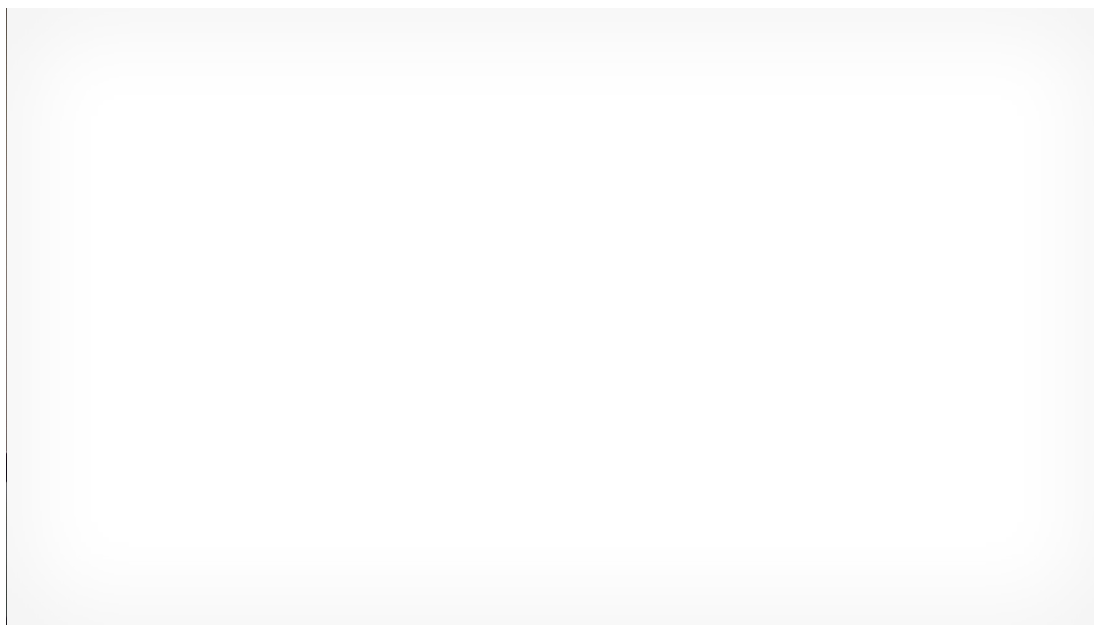
awareness of the sex trafficking industry, thanks to more media coverage. And the state of Nevada has just made history by becoming the first state to seat a majority-female Legislature. Plus, Guinasso said, Nevada's governor and attorney general "have been champions for the dignity of women. I believe they'll be sympathetic to the arguments we're making in this case."

[How a regular girl from Keller became a victim of sex trafficking and managed to escape](#)

But others will probably not be sympathetic. Sex is big business in Nevada. According to a 2005 report in the *Nevada Law Journal*, brothels pull in about \$25 million per year. The counties, rather than the state, collect licensing fees, property taxes, work-card fees, investigation fees and liquor license fees, totaling about \$10 million a year.

Christina Parreira is a doctoral candidate at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and a former licensed sex worker. She called Guinasso a predator whose motivation is publicity.

ADVERTISING



"We are already a maligned and stigmatized group," Parreira said of sex workers. "We don't deserve this. We deserve to be left alone, to work, make money, and live our lives like every other American."

Charleston's case seems to hinge on two factors. The first has to do with interstate commerce. Under a federal law called the Mann Act, a person is breaking the law if he, "persuades, induces,

or Possession of the United States, to engage in prostitution." Nevada brothels rely heavily on marketing outside of the state to attract both buyers and workers.

The second hinge is the relationship that exists between legal, voluntary prostitution and illegal trafficking. According to a study published by three German and British economists in 2013, jurisdictions where prostitution is legal experience more instances of sex trafficking. Nevada, the only state with legalized prostitution, has the nation's highest incidence of sex trafficking, according to the complaint, 63 percent higher than second-place New York.

Guinasso said he has had trouble getting records of Charleston's employment at the Lyon County brothel where she claims to have been trafficked. Under Nevada law, brothel workers must apply for a license issued by county commissions. Between December 2017 and December 2018, Guinasso made five formal records requests to Lyon County. Four of those requests were denied. In response to the fifth request, the county provided a list of license numbers and first names with no other identifying information. The lawsuit filed Monday will allow Guinasso to subpoena those documents.

The case will likely have little direct impact on sexually-oriented businesses in Texas, although Guinasso said a victory could restrict the way those businesses advertise. Still, every action that draws attention to the vicious crime of sex trafficking and restricts in any way the ability of sex traffickers and their customers to do business is a step in the right direction.

Ryan Sanders is a writer and pastor at Irving Bible Church. He wrote this column for The Dallas Morning News.

Texas woman sues to ban legal prostitution in Nevada



(MGN/file)

By Associated Press | Updated: Tue 3:06 PM, Feb 26, 2019

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Dallas Morning News

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FEBRUARY 26, 2019

Metro Voice News

Study: Dollar store, Aldi produce same quality as supermarkets

Consumers have been trained that supermarkets with the slick commercials, fancy lighting and beautiful fresh produce displays have better quality. So buying your favorite fruits and vegetables at a discount store means you must be getting lower quality goods, right? Wrong. New research reveals that produce sold at dollar stores are actually quite comparable to that sold at traditional grocery chains, only markedly cheaper.



FEATURED EXPERT

Courtney CoughenourAssistant Professor, School of
Community Health Sciences

FEBRUARY 26, 2019

iHeart Radio

Dollar Store Produce Is Just as Good as the Grocery Store

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Discount Store Produce Versus Grocery Store Produce

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Lawsuit seeks to shut down US legal brothels

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A federal lawsuit has been filed in the US in an effort to close legal brothels in the state of Nevada.

Filed by anti-trafficking activist Rebekah Charleston, the lawsuit takes on the state legislature and Nevada Democratic Governor Steve Sisolak, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported.

Apart from abolishing legal prostitution in the Silver State, the lawsuit seeks to create a \$2 million fund to help women quit sex trade.

According to law, counties with fewer than 700,000 residents are allowed to host legal brothels.

The lawsuit demands that brothels in n Elko, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Storey and White Pine counties be announced unconstitutional.



PressTV-US cracks down on sex traffic from south

American authorities arrest a number of sex traffickers operating in over a dozen US cities.

'Sex work: Just a euphemism'

Charleston was allegedly sex trafficked herself by two pimps in the 2000s.

"Something needs to be done," Charleston said. "Because of the fact that I was trafficked inside the brothels, I just have to stand up and say, 'No more.' Women are not public, sexual property to be bought and sold."

According to the 28-page lawsuit, she was "not permitted to turn down a sex buyer," and was sent to the brothels as a "form of punishment" by her pimps.

She was later sent to Las Vegas "for greater profits in the illegal sex trade."

"Prostitution is inherently gender-based violence, and there is no way to perform prostitution in a safe way," Charleston said. "The term 'sex work' is a euphemism that makes it sound like something it's not."



PressTV-UK slavery hotline uncovers 5

The anti-slavery service identified pote
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Meanwhile, the brothels are moving to

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"Every single worker at the Mustang Ranch is required to undergo an FBI fingerprint and criminal database background check every single year," brothel owner Lance Gilman told KOLO TV. "In over 4,000 work card applications filed over the last 20 years by working professionals and employees at the Mustang, not one has turned up to be a victim of trafficking."

According to attorney Jason Guinasso, who tried to ban brothels last year, there are prospects for illegalization of the brothels.

"We've got increased public awareness leading to community action," he said. **Source:** presstv.com

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By Scott Sonner
Associated Press

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Gilman said Guinasso would be better off trying to help illegal prostitutes escape from their pimps, working to outlaw the distribution of handbills on the Las Vegas Strip for illegal prostitution services and cracking down on illegal sexual services at massage parlors.

"His entire complaint is about illegal prostitution and trafficking, which has no relationship to licensed brothels in Nevada," Gilman said.

Regulators fine Wynn Resorts \$20 million over sex allegations

By Ken Ritter
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Nevada gambling regulators fined casino mogul Steve Wynn's former company a record \$20 million on Tuesday for failing to investigate claims of sexual misconduct made against him before he resigned a year ago.

The penalty against Wynn Resorts Ltd. ends an investigation that began after The Wall Street Journal reported that several women said the company founder harassed or assaulted them.

Wynn Resorts will keep its gambling license under the Nevada Gaming Commission settlement reached last month. The four current commissioners unanimously approved the fine.

"It's not about one man," said Commissioner Philip Pro, a former federal court judge. "It's about a failure of a corporate culture to effectively govern itself as it should."

The previous highest fine in state history was \$5.5 million in 2014 against the sports betting and mobile gambling system company now known as CG Technology. It runs sports betting operations at several Las Vegas casinos.

Commissioners John Moran Jr. and Deborah Fuetsch said they considered a higher fine, but did not specify an amount.

Chairman Tony Alamo said the amount "makes it clear to all licensees that this culture cannot be tolerated," while also letting the company "heal."

"It needs to move needles here," he said. "It needs to ring across the entire country."

Steve Wynn himself was not part of the Wynn Resorts settlement, and neither he nor any personal representatives attended the commission hearing.

One of Wynn's attorneys, Colby Williams, said by telephone that he was aware of the fine but declined to comment.

Wynn resigned as board chairman and company CEO in February 2018 following reports that several women said he harassed or assaulted them. Wynn also sold his

shares in the company. He has denied all the allegations.

Wynn Resorts acknowledged in the settlement that several former board members and executives knew about but failed to investigate complaints including one that led Wynn to pay \$7.5 million in 2005 to a former salon employee who alleged he raped her and that she became pregnant as a result.

"Mr. Wynn ... engaged in intimate and sexual conduct with (company) employees," the settlement document said.

The company also failed to investigate a cocktail server's allegation that from 2005 to 2006 Wynn pressured her into a nonconsensual sexual relationship, the documents said. Wynn paid a \$975,000 private settlement to that woman and her parents, the settlement said.

Wynn Resorts neither admitted nor denied Nevada Gaming Control Board allegations that Wynn sexually harassed multiple flight attendants on company aircraft.

"The company's initial response during this period was driven by Mr. Wynn's adamant denial of all allegations," said a Wynn Resorts statement from company spokesman Michael Weaver. It acknowledged a "short-sighted focus on initially defending Mr. Wynn, rather than reassuring employees of the company's commitment to a safe and respectful work environment."

The company points to wholesale changes in the boardroom and executive offices, including hiring a new chief executive, requiring new sexual harassment prevention training for all employees and adding a women's leadership council to promote equality in the workplace.

Wynn's name was removed from the company's Massachusetts project now called Encore Boston Harbor.

"In sum, these 25,000 employees, led by CEO Matt Maddox and a reshaped board of directors, are the company that stands before the commission today, and not Steve Wynn," the company said in its Jan. 25 written agreement to settle the case.

\$250 reward in stolen credit card case

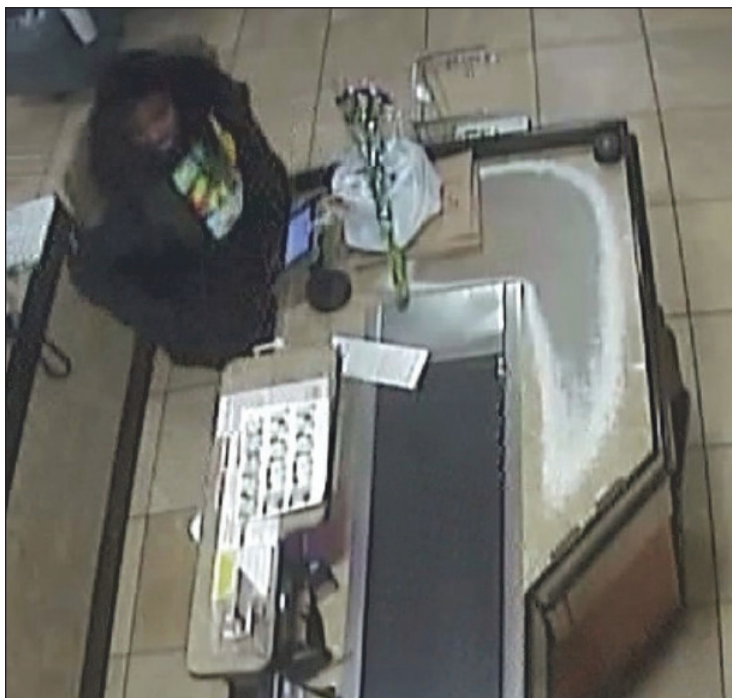
Nevada Appeal staff report

Secret Witness is offering a reward of \$250 for information leading to the arrest and prosecution of the suspect wanted in connection with the fraudulent use of a stolen credit card in Carson City.

The Carson City Sheriff's Office is investigation a case of fraudulent use of a stolen credit card. The suspect used a stolen credit card to purchase items at Raley's in Carson City near the beginning of February.

The Carson City Sheriff's Office is asking for the public's assistance in identifying the suspect. Anyone having information relating to this crime or the suspect should contact the Carson City Sheriff's Office at 775-283-7853, Secret Witness at 775-322-4900, www.secretwitness.com, or text your tip to 847411 (TIP411) keyword - SW.

All calls to Secret Witness remain anonymous, and Secret Witness pays rewards for information on all crimes.



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Woman sues to outlaw Nevada brothels

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The state's legal brothel owners criticized the suit.

"Guinasso's actions will put thousands of women back into the hands of pimps working illegally," said Lance Gilman, owner of the Mustang Ranch brothel, which opened east of Reno in 1971.

U.S. territories seek storm-recovery aid

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